

One Wisconsin Now: Republicans refuse to allow votes on budget proposals to help vote

Posted on Tuesday, May 14, 2019

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MEDIA CONTACT
Mike Browne, Deputy Director
mike@OneWisconsinNow.org
[\(608\) 444-3483](tel:(608)444-3483)

Action to Prevent Action Sums Up GOP Attitude Toward Democracy and Voter Rights
MADISON, Wis. — A ruling of the Republican co-chair of the Joint Committee on Finance today prohibited the state budget committee from considering or voting on measures that would have helped Wisconsinites vote. Proposals included in Gov. Tony Evers' 2019-21 budget that could have been considered but for the ruling included measures to expand voter registration and to conform state law with a federal court order in the voting rights lawsuit, *One Wisconsin Institute, et al. v. Thomsen, et al.*

"Republicans summed up their attitude toward democracy and voter rights today by refusing to even allow a vote on voter registration and voter rights," said One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Analiese Eicher. "Their concern is ensuring the rules on voting are tilted to give themselves an unfair partisan advantage instead of helping voters participate in our democracy."

In his budget plan, Gov. Evers included funding for an automatic voter registration initiative that would have registered eligible individuals to vote when getting a driver's license or state ID. The plan would also help ensure already registered voters keep their registration current and study expanding voter registration to situations where people provide information to other government agencies that would confirm their eligibility to vote.

Evers' budget also proposed bringing state law into compliance with a federal court enforcement action in the voting rights case *One Wisconsin Institute, et al. v. Thomsen, et al.* The budget included a repeal of the actions taken by the Republican controlled legislature in the last days of Gov. Scott Walker's administration, trying to re-impose limits on early voting and previously struck down voter ID requirements in state statute.

The voting rights provisions were among a list of over 130 items Republicans stripped from the budget document in an omnibus motion on the first day of budget deliberations.